

Massachusetts Jobs with Justice

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Dr. Stuart Altman, Chair
Massachusetts Health Policy Commission
50 Milk Street, 8th Floor
Boston, MA 02109

April 10, 2015

Dear Chairman Altman:

My name is Russ Davis. I am the Executive Director of Massachusetts Jobs With Justice, a coalition of over 120 community, faith, student and labor organizations. While I am not a nurse, although my mother was, many of our members our members have been patients and it is from that perspective and from that of a member of the community that I wish to address you. When you or a family member is in an intensive care unit, there are many concerns and worries running through your mind. Thankfully, because of this law, one of those worries has been eliminated. As a patient, you now know that you will be cared for by a nurse, one nurse, during your time in the ICU. That is, so long as the regulations that this board creates uphold the intent of this law. Patients have enough to be concerned with as it is, they should have the peace of mind of knowing they will be cared for by one nurse while they are in such a vulnerable state. Nurses, along with other members of the ICU team, are critical to successful patient care and need to be able to devote their full attention to one patient at a time.

Along these same lines, I want to address the reporting requirements for hospitals as part of your draft regulations. I would encourage you to change the requirement for reporting violations of the law so that violations are reported immediately. It is very important that if a hospital is breaking the law that the public knows about it and knows about it right away.

Finally, on the subject of the public being informed, it is important that the people of Massachusetts know that this new law exists and is in place. I would encourage you to explicitly include in your regulations that hospitals be required to post information for patients about their rights. Every patient should be made aware of the fact that they are entitled to one to one care in an ICU and that there are no circumstances when they should be cared for by a nurse with two patients. The public being aware of this law is vital to its enforcement.

Thank you for the opportunity to address this board.

Sincerely,

Russ Davis
Executive Director
Massachusetts Jobs With Justice